



## Conference focusing on dairy goats planned in February

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MADISON – *Profitability and Progress* is the theme for the 2014 Focus on Goats Conference. Registration is now open for this event, which will be held on February 7 and 8 at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

“As consumer interest in dairy goat milk products continues to increase, the industry will need to innovate and grow to meet the demand,” said Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Division Administrator Dan Smith. “This conference will allow dairy goat farmers and processors to share ideas to further develop the production of our unique and high-quality dairy goat milk products.”

The two-day conference will begin with a keynote address by Katie Hedrich of LaClare Farms in Chilton. Hedrich won the 2011 U.S. Championship Cheese for Evalon, a hard goat’s milk cheese made from the milk of her family’s goat herd.

There will be eight different breakout sessions during the Conference. Some will discuss dairy goat selection, feed options and goat health. Other topics include retrofitting a dairy barn, record keeping, business planning and adding value to milk.

DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel will speak during Friday’s lunch program. A cheese reception will be held on Friday evening, which will be open to the public for a \$5 fee at the door.

A trade show will be available throughout the conference. Vendors will speak briefly about their products and services during Saturday’s breakfast.

Wisconsin is a national leader in dairy goats. In 2012, Wisconsin was home to 46,000 milk goats, more than any other state. More than a dozen Wisconsin dairy processors use goat milk in producing cheese.

To register, visit <http://www.wdga.org/fog-2014>. The full registration of \$65 for an individual and \$110 for two people includes access to all sessions, the trade show, meals and cheese reception. Interested individuals can also pay \$40 for a single day registration.

There are special registration rates for students. Students may attend the full conference for \$45 or pay \$25 to attend a single day.

This event is organized by DATCP, the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association. For more information, contact DATCP’s Becky Paris at 608-224-5115 or [rebecca.paris@wisconsin.gov](mailto:rebecca.paris@wisconsin.gov).

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